

## Reasons to Renovate

Understanding and taking advantage of your building's historic qualities are important parts of revitalizing your Main Street district. Recapturing the history of the area will help create good will and an inviting environment for customers and potential tenants.

- Well designed and sensitive improvements can increase sales and profitability
- The quality of craftsmanship and materials often found in historic buildings serve to maintain or increase a property's value over time.
- It requires less money to renovate an existing structure than to construct a new building of the same size and quality.
- Apartments and commercial spaces in renovated buildings often generate higher rents.
- Each successful renovation spurs more neighborhood improvements.
- Renovation rescues local history and the unique sense of place of your Main Street district.
- Preserving and repairing historic materials conserves natural resources.
- Building improvements demonstrate pride in your property and community.

Wisconsin's history is preserved within the structures that line the streets of our communities.

## FREE

### Design Assistance

*for properties within designated Main Street districts*

"[The Wisconsin Main Street Design Specialist's] quick response was critical in working with the owner and builder on achieving a complementary building to our downtown... The owners liked it so much that they are building exactly what he drew." *Mark Erickson, Osceola Main Street Design Committee Chair*

"[Platteville's first Historic Preservation Commission], of which I was a member, reviewed many projects sketched on the back of match book covers. So in 1999, when Platteville became a Main Street Community, it was wonderful to have detailed architectural designs from the Wisconsin Main Street Design Coordinator. Those projects took the least amount of time to decide with the highest degree of certainty what the commissioners were approving." *Mark Ihm, President of Wisconsin Association of Historic Preservation Commissions 2000-2004*



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# Improving Your Downtown Property

**Realizing its full potential  
and profitability**



WISCONSIN MAIN STREET

# Protecting Your Historic Investment



Built soundly of quality materials, historic buildings reflect the history, pride and aspirations of your community and help set downtown apart from other shopping centers.

Most owners of historic buildings want to renovate their properties in a way that protects their investment. However, the historic character of these buildings is all too often inappropriately altered. It is common for repairable historic materials to be hidden or replaced with products whose life span and quality are considerably less than the original. Storefront and upper windows are frequently reduced in size, often causing lighting and heating costs to actually increase, and obstructing views of merchandise. Good advice on improving and maintaining your historic property may be hard to find...

## Ask Main Street

If your building is located within the Main Street program area of a designated Main Street community, you may be eligible for free design assistance. Wisconsin Main Street has a design specialist on staff to answer your questions, provide design schematics, and offer written and verbal recommendations about your building.

The goal is to enhance the physical vitality of the business district to attract and keep customers, tenants and investors. Rehabilitated buildings, attractive storefronts, and properly designed signage all help to create an environment where people want to shop and visit.

## Available services

The Wisconsin Main Street Design Specialist provides design assistance on a first-come, first-serve basis. Areas of design assistance include:

- Confidential one-to-one consultation.
- Thoughtful recommendations based on your building's historic qualities and your budget.
- Schematic drawings illustrating design and color recommendations for the building's exterior facade (along with specifications).
- Recommendations on how to proceed with the project.
- Follow-up phone assistance.

## Set up a design consultation

Contact your local Main Street program manager and they will arrange an appointment for you with the Wisconsin Main Street Design Specialist.

*Be sure to ask your local Main Street program manager about other building improvement incentives that might be available through the local design committee. Also ask about business incentives like free small business counseling as well as promotional opportunities.*